

CAB FRG Web presence is up, running

By Spc. Creighton Holub
CAB PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

After a year of battling rumors and trying to keep the Families of 4th Infantry Division's Combat Aviation Brigade Soldiers informed, the brigade's Family Readiness Group has gone high tech with its part of the Army new secure FRG Web site.

The purpose of the FRG Web site is to provide Soldiers and Family members a direct connection to command information for the unit.

Soldiers can gain access to the site at www.armyfrg.org. To access their unit's link, they click on "Find an FRG" and select their FRG's home location. The Soldiers are required to enter the last four digits of their social security number, first and last names and their unit identification code. The "UIC" can be found either at the Soldiers' units or at the rear detachments of deployed units.

"Anyone in your Family can join the Web site," said Shannon McRae, CAB FRG assistant. "Most people don't have their Soldier's UIC. I didn't even have my husband's UIC, and I had to ask him for it. (Requiring the UIC) makes it harder for people to hack in, and we can put more information than ever before on it because it's more secure."

Soldiers have been instructed to avoid posting important personal and unit information on the Internet, where it can be used by hackers and enemy forces. The new FRG site is a security-minded, accessible site for Soldiers and their Families.

Since some Soldiers' spouses moved back home and away from the Fort Hood area during deployments, it was harder to keep them in the information loop before the advent of the Army FRG Web site.

“(Now) they will be able to go to the Web site and download forms and pictures,” McRae said. “People can also send us an e-mail if they have a question or comment regarding the Web site. It also enables them to reach me so I can get them in touch with their company FRG if they are new to our community.”

The busier home life of modern society occasionally keeps Soldiers and their spouses away from community events that may interest them.

“A lot of folks work or have extra curricular activities with their kids, and they’re not able to make all the FRG meetings,” McRae said. “This Web site shows them everything going on in their entire brigade in one swoop. It also gives them specific information about meetings, functions going on in their community – not just their brigade. It also helps them by providing helpful links in case they didn’t know where some resources were. If they go to the Web site, they will find a lot of helpful links just by playing around.”

Soldiers appreciate the fact the brigade’s FRG efforts have been so effective in managing the increased information flow to keep the system user-friendly.

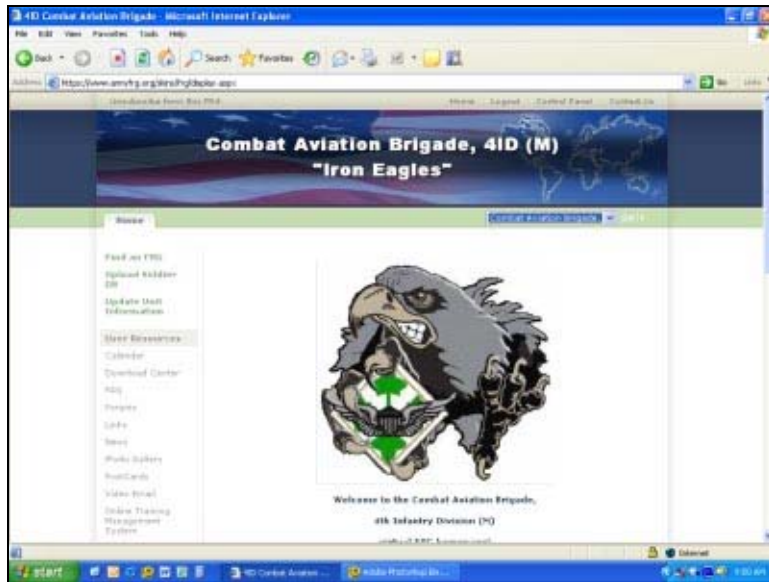
“The FRG is very good,” said Sgt. Travis Pritchard, a Longbow Apache mechanic and crew chief assigned to Company C, 1st Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment. “The Army is a Family within itself. My wife gets FRG e-mails all the time. It lets her know what’s going on.”

The e-mails, phone calls and the new Web site enable Families to stay in touch with both their Soldier and their military Family.

“The FRGs are important because they let you know where resources are available in your community, and they let you know more about your company than what you hear

from just your Soldier,” McRae explained. “You really get to do more things as a group compared to being isolated by yourself in your housing area.

“Just being able to come out to a barbecue or a special event the company has set up just so you can get away for a little while really helps people. You don’t have to be a volunteer or work at that event. It’s just a matter of coming out as a Family member and giving your support.”



CAB FRG home page.

The Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, Family Readiness Group Web site is up and ready for Soldiers and Family members of the brigade to access. FRG Web sites can be useful tools for Soldiers and Family members to gain information while a Soldier is deployed.

(U.S. Army illustration)